

# CUTS IN ACTION

CUTS  
International

July-September 2006

## Creating Mountains Out of Valleys



Three events of the recent past have really unnerved me, as if the nation has gone berserk and people have abandoned rational behaviour. Each of them has happened mainly because of media hype, created out of a cutthroat competition among the different TV channels.

The first incident was the coverage on Prince – the kid who was rescued from 60-feet deep hole in Haryana. The second was the publicity over the test results of pesticide residues in soft drinks. While there is some merit in the first two, the same would not apply to the senile about-turn by Jaswant Singh in identifying the mole in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

One SMS that I received summed up the Prince episode thus: "The whole nation watched the recovery of Prince from a deep hole, but none seem to be bothered about the whole nation, which is in a deep hole". Many rushed to offer all types of rewards for Prince, including the Haryana Chief Minister, but none

said anything about hauling up the negligent digger who left the hole unprotected.

Thousands of people continue to fell into thousands of proverbial and actual manholes etc., but they do not even get a line in the media. Coming to soft drinks row, a similar report three years ago had led the Parliament getting into action. The Rajasthan High Court had asked the soft drink companies to write on their containers, whether they do contain pesticides or not. The matter is still pending before the Supreme Court. Anyway, we continue to consume harmful pesticides but can do little, except raise some noise.

For example, the banned and spurious drugs, which continue to be sold in the Indian market, and the government does not do anything. This is despite several efforts made by advocacy groups, government committees, parliamentary debates, etc.

We are currently having a debate on the drug pricing regime. The Fertiliser and Chemicals Ministry is trying to bring in an irrational discipline, which has been opposed by both the

Commerce & Industries Ministry and the Health Ministry. One of the arguments is that it will shy away investment, if we get into excessive regulation. The brouhaha over soft drinks could send a wrong message that we are singling out Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and would also scare away foreign investment. Third event certainly calls for a boycott as Jaswant Singh, its author, told the country that he would name the mole to the PM, and created a huge suspense. As a result, the respected scientist V S Arunachalam was incarcerated by an irresponsible media report. As is the wont, other TV channels followed blindly like the mice that followed Pied Piper. Who will compensate Arunachalam for the agony that he and his family suffered?

Whether it is Jaswant Singh's idea or his publisher's, controversies always help promote a book. Should not media stop covering such misleading claims directed to sell a book? It is high time the media inculcated ethics, else we will have worse scenario in future.

*Pradeep S. Mehta*

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

### Innovative Activities and Targeted Objectives



In today's world where the virtues of the globalisation are extolled without due consideration to the miseries of the poor, contribution by CUTS in highlighting the needs of the poor in the developing countries is significant. CUTS has been working at global as well as national level to focus the attention to the equity issues in the areas of trade, environment and sustainable consumption.

Through its innovative activities and targeted objectives, CUTS has been able to make significant impacts and develop a committed team. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would like to facilitate and encourage their activities in future. Success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by UN will largely depend on the work of the organisation like CUTS.

*Rajendra Shende*

Chief, Energy and OzoneAction, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, UNEP, France

### Risen to the Forefront of the Consumer Movement



I first met Pradeep S Mehta in 1990 at the Consumers International (CI) conferences and meetings and have since then had the pleasure of attending conferences organised by CI and CUTS in India. Over the years, CUTS has risen to the forefront of the consumer movement. It has now become an internationally recognised NGO speaking for the interests of consumers in developing countries.

It has further expanded its horizon by conducting studies and capacity building programmes in African countries with the establishment of the Africa Resource Centre in 2001, a milestone in CUTS' history as it serves to strengthen and facilitate cooperation among developing countries. The contribution of CUTS in the furtherance of consumer interests will be pronounced ever more.

*Pamela W S Chan*

Chief Executive, Consumer Council, China

## Trade Diplomacy

CUTS Institute for Regulation & Competition (CIRC) hosted its fourth Academic Lecture on 'Trade Policy Making and Multi-stakeholder Diplomacy' by Raymond Saner and Lichia Yiu, Director and President respectively, Centre for Socio-Economic Development (CSEND), Geneva, in New Delhi, on July 04, 2006.



Lichia Yiu delivering the lecture on 'Trade Policy Making and Stakeholder Diplomacy'

Lichia Yiu outlined the multifaceted role that various stakeholders including government, business development agencies, civil society organisations (CSOs) and commercial diplomats take up from time to time. Dr Saner focused on the key ingredients for success and failure in trade policymaking processes.

([www.circ.in/erALS04.htm](http://www.circ.in/erALS04.htm))

### Competition Law in India

CIRC organised the fifth seminar under the Academic Lecture Series at the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), Kolkata, on August 26, 2006. Pradeep S Mehta, the Director General of CIRC was the guest speaker at the event.

Subrata K Ray, the Vice-Chairman of the ICSI-EIRC introduced Mehta to the audience as 'an authority on Competition Law in India' including a short account of his profile.

Mehta focused his lecture on the 'Evolution of Competition Law with respect to India' by giving a brief outline of CUTS' activities on competition law and policy at the national and international level.

([www.circ.in/erALS05.htm](http://www.circ.in/erALS05.htm))

### Market Linkages

CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC), in partnership with the Danish Association for International Cooperation (MS-Zambia), organised a two-day training workshop under the project entitled, 'Market Linkages' at Chipata, Zambia, on August 10-11, 2006.

The workshop was organised in three sessions, which included presentations, group discussions and plenary sessions. In the workshop, papers were presented by Farmer Support Organisation (FOSUP), Export Board of Zambia (EBZ) and Vladimir Chilinya of CUTS ARC. The participants provided some useful recommendations against the

problems, such as lack of institutional structures and failure to plan for markets before production.

Ambassador Kishan Rana, an expert on the subject was the Chair for the Lecture. Participants from government ministries, civil society and consumer organisations, academia and research bodies, law professionals and various embassies and high commissions attended.

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### Sensitising the Youth

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD) organised a one-day great gathering at Bhilwara, Rajasthan, on August 12, 2006, to commemorate the International Youth Day in which around 150 people participated. The main agenda of the meet was early marriages and premature pregnancy.

The aim of the workshop was to sensitise the youth on the ill-effects of early marriages and premature pregnancies and to provide measures and precautions to eschew from them.

The workshop addressed the need for youth to be endowed with legal knowledge in order to take appropriate decisions in making their future safe.

([www.cuts-international.org/eventsreport-Aug06.htm#wyd12aug06](http://www.cuts-international.org/eventsreport-Aug06.htm#wyd12aug06))

### Competition Policy Tools

CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER), with the support of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India (GoI) organised a knowledge dissemination workshop on 'Options for Using Competition Law/Policy Tools in Dealing with Anticompetitive Practices in Pharmaceuticals and the Health Delivery System', in New Delhi, on September 08, 2006.

The participants included health and competition experts, academics, NGO activists and representatives of business associations. There emerged the views that there should be a coordinated framework of regulation in the pharmaceutical industry and the health delivery system, including the hospitals, doctors, pharmacists and the diagnostic laboratories.

Presenting the study report, Nitya Nanda of CUTS, emphasised that the pharmaceutical and health delivery system is a peculiar case of market failure as consumers are not the decision makers.

([www.cuts-ccier.org/pdf/Event-Report08Sep06.pdf](http://www.cuts-ccier.org/pdf/Event-Report08Sep06.pdf))

## CUTS CITEE's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE), a public lecture was organised in New Delhi on July 29, 2006.

Prof T N Srinivasan, Samuel C Park, Jr Professor of Economics, Yale University, US delivered the lecture on 'The Future of the Global Trading System: Doha Round and Beyond'.

Dr Kirit Parikh, member of the Planning Commission, chaired the meeting. Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International highlighted the role that the organisation has been playing over a decade. The Commerce Secretary S N Menon said that India has shown flexibility in the negotiations given the fact that it was not a demandeur of the Doha Round.



Distinguished Participants at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CITEE

## 1-Day Celebrations at Scindia School

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International was invited as the Chief Guest on the occasion of Independence Day celebrations at the Scindia School, Gwalior. Mehta studied at the Scindia School, Gwalior in the 1960s.

In his address to the school, Mehta while sharing some precious moments of his school days emphasised the need for inculcating discipline in human life, as it proved helpful to him. He reminded the responsibilities of humans towards the society stressing the need that everybody must strive to become a responsible citizen, and not just an accomplished individual. "If everyone decides to contribute some amount of his time to help those who cannot help themselves, then that will be sufficient for the development of this country", he argued. ([www.pradeepsmehta.com/IndependenceDay06.htm](http://www.pradeepsmehta.com/IndependenceDay06.htm))



Pradeep S Mehta as the Chief Guest is addressing the audience on Independence Day

### Fiscal Management

Clement Onyango of CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC), Nairobi, attended the workshop on the 'Fiscal Management Bill, 2006', organised by the Representative Institutions Programme (RIP) of the Centre for Governance and Development (CGD), at Nairobi, Kenya, on August 29, 2006.

The aim of this workshop was to provide a forum where experts, policy makers MP's and other stakeholders can assess the proposed bill for the regulation of the national budget process.

### Meet on Women & Child

George Cheriyan and R K Sharma of CUTS CART attended a state level consultation on 'Prioritising Women & Children in the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan' organised by United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), in collaboration with Department of Women & Child Development (DWCD), Department of Planning, and Rajasthan State Institute of Public Administration (HCM-RIPA), at Jaipur, on August 29-30, 2006.

The purpose of the consultation was to enrich the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan preparation process and ensure that measures to realise the rights of women and children are duly reflected in the plan document.

### National Policy for Farmers

Anutosh Biswas of CUTS CITEE participated in a State Level Consultation on Draft National Policy for Farmers organised by National Commission on Farmers (NCF), Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India at Bikaner, Rajasthan, on August 29, 2006.

The purpose of the consultation was to provide inputs, advice and suggestions to the Government for preparing the final report of National Policy for Farmers.

### Indo-Tajik Affairs

Rijit Sengupta of CUTS C-CIER participated in a seminar organised by the Indian Council of World Affairs and the India Central Asia Foundation on 'India – Tajikistan in International Affairs', held in New Delhi, on August 08, 2006.

A delegation of high profile government officials and businessmen led by the Tajik President H E Emomali Sharifovich Rahmanov discussed important socio-economic and political issues with Indian academicians, government officials and other stakeholders.



### SHORT CUTS

- Gideon Rabinovitz of CUTS London Resource Centre (CUTS LRC) attended the ITC Executive Forum entitled, 'Bringing the Poor into the Export Process: Linkages and Strategic Implications', at Berlin, from September 27-30, 2006.
- Vinayak R Pandey of CUTS C-CIER represented CUTS on a round-table, organised by the Planning Commission of India to discuss its approach paper on infrastructure regulation in New Delhi, on September 25, 2006.
- Nitya Nanda, Policy Analyst CUTS C-CIER attended the second meeting of the Pharmaceuticals Advisory Forum (PAF) held in New Delhi, on September 23, 2006.
- Nupur Anchlia, as CUTS representative in Mumbai, attended the Interactive Meeting on Export Potential of Organic Products at World Trade Centre, Mumbai, on September 20, 2006.
- Debottam Chakraborty of CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC) attended a 'Citizens' Convention on Land Acquisition' at Singur, West Bengal' on September 06, 2006.
- Pranav Kumar, Simi TB and Ritu Lodha of CUTS CITEE participated in South Asia Regional Conference on 'WTO and Doha Agenda: The Way Forward' jointly organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Islamabad-based South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) held in New Delhi, on August 29, 2006.
- Bipul Chatterjee of CUTS CITEE participated in the Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth (IPPG) Research workshop held in Dhaka, from July 31-August 04, 2006.
- Vladimir Chilinya of CUTS ARC attended a post Hong Kong workshop organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Trade, Zambia held in Lusaka, from August 31-September 02, 2006.
- Mehta attended the second and third meeting of the Planning Commission Working Group on Competition Policy held in New Delhi, on July 28, 2006 and September 05, 2006, respectively. He also participated in a Hearing before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance for the Competition Bill and presented CUTS stance on the Bill.

## FORUM

### A Inspiration to Learn More!

I have been a student of the Institute of the Company Secretaries for the last few years and studying this course mainly because of the extreme stagnation prevailing in my State Service which I joined after completing the West Bengal Civil Service Exam, 1985 and coming out as the topper of that year.

About a week or two back, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture on Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act and then on the new Competition Law by Pradeep S Mehta who I came to know is an authority on the subject. I enjoyed the discussion very much and I would like to subscribe to the journal 'Policy Watch' which is being published regularly from Jaipur. I hope the same would prove to be fruitful to me in the coming examinations.

**Himadri K Chaudhuri**  
WBCS  
Assistant Commissioner Sales Tax  
Government of West Bengal

## VISITORS

Name	Comments
Arun Kumar, Director Consumer Coordination Council (CCC) Noida, India	For a person associated with consumer issues from non-governmental approach and as a Director of CCC, it was a very educative visit and meeting. It has opened new vistas, which will help grow the movement and its driving forces for common benefit, if implemented. We hope to gain and stay in touch with CUTS in many ways.
Dr Kavita Bhatnagar Deputy Commissioner Central Excise Jaipur, India	It was a very satisfying feeling to visit CUTS, which had been so far and yet so near during my PhD work. The atmosphere is conducive to research work and the amicable attitude of CUTS people will ensure that it stays a CUT above!
Nitin Desai Former Under- Secretary -General United Nations	CUTS is well-known internationally and I am happy I would visit it and meet some of the people who, under Pradeep Mehta's leadership, have done such fine work on consumer protection, competition, trade and related issues.

### Glimpses of Ongoing and Future Projects of CUTS

<p><b>CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics &amp; Environment (CUTS CITEE)</b> </p> <p>CUTS CITEE has undertaken the project 'Documenting advocacy practices involving local stakeholders with the process of trade and globalisation in four Indian States', with the support from Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands. Under the aegis of Oxfam International's Knowledge Infrastructure with and between Counterparts (KIC) initiative, the project intends to imbibe the GRANITE model by focusing on the poor countries, which are facing challenges of globalisation. It aims to empower the local stakeholders on issues of globalisation and trade, including the impact of such advocacy efforts. Case studies will be conducted in Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal with the help of GRANITE Project partners.</p>	<p><b>CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD)</b> </p> <p>CUTS CHD has been selected as the Mother NGO (MNGO) for Chittorgarh, Rajasthan under the 'Reproductive and Child Health (RCH)' scheme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India (GoI). The objectives of the project broadly include utilisation and delivery of health services for reduction in maternal mortality; reproductive mortality; infant mortality and fertility; improvement in maternal healthcare; addressing general healthcare issues; childcare; and family welfare through multi-stakeholder involvement and action.</p>
<p><b>CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment &amp; Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER)</b> </p> <p>CUTS C-CIER has undertaken a project, 'Study of Cartel Case Laws Under the MRTP Act: Learning for the CCI'. It aims to develop an approach for dealing with cartels in the light of the provisions of the Competition Act. The project is being supported by the World Bank, and implemented in collaboration with the National Law University, Jodhpur, India. The research under the project would focus to analyse India's experience of cartels under the MRTP regime and draw lessons from the two jurisdictions of Brazil and US, for incorporating lessons for the CCI.</p>	<p><b>CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC)</b> </p> <p>CUTS CRC has received a project from ActionAid International, India on the land reclamation by the Government of West Bengal in three districts of state viz. Hooghly, Howrah and South 24-Parganas for industrialisation. The project, a four-month study initiative, would assess the livelihood impact of the farmers whose land has been taken away.</p>
<p><b>CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research &amp; Training (CUTS CART)</b> </p> <p>CUTS CART has been appointed Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India (GoI) as the Regional Resource Agency (RRA) for Rajasthan under the National Environmental Awareness Campaign (NEAC), for three years, i.e. from 2006-07 to 2008-09. The advertisement regarding the RRA for each states appeared in all the national news dailies, both in Hindi &amp; English, on September 14, 2006. 'Solid Waste Management' is the theme for the campaign for the year 2006-07.</p>	<p><b>CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC), Lusaka</b> </p> <p>CUTS ARC has undertaken a one-year project entitled, 'Market Linkages' that will seek to link small-scale farmers, producers through district associations, to the national, regional and global market. It will further highlight and address concerns about global trade and development as it affects sustainable livelihood in Zambia.</p>